Important Lessons for The General Muslim Public

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«الدروس المهمة لعامة الأمة»

باللغة الإنكليزيّة

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Important Lessons for The General Muslim Public[1]

Lesson One:

Learn Sura "Fatiha", the opening chapter of the Glorious Quran, study it, understand it, absorb it, observe it, practice it on a daily basis, apply it in your life, try to promote it's true understanding, share your concept about this Sura with others and teach it to others (whether it be your own youngsters, new people reverting to Islam, or others).[2]

Lesson Two:

Learn (the most important statement of faith), Shahadatu an La Ilaha Illa Allah, wa Ann Mohammadan Rasoolul-lah (I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, and I bear witness openly that Mohammed is the messenger cf Allah), in a way that enables you to understand the complete meaning of the statement, the prerequisites associated with it, the subtle meanings of it, the general scope, and the commitment associated with it. Learn that when one negates the presence of a god, that ensures that there is no deity, non whatsoever, is worthy of being worship. Moreover, one must realize fully, that complete worship,

1. This publication was included in one of the previous publications of the Ifta, which was published in 1403 H. However, when this was prepared for a separate publication, it was revised and enlarged.

2. The explanation between brackets are added by the translator for more clarification of this point.

prayer, sincerity and devotion and dedication in worship must be offered to Allah, the Almighty Alone. He has no partner, associate or help.

As for the prerequisites of "There is no deity worthy of worship but Allah alone", they will be illustrated as follows as a complete, authentic, true, deep and meaningful knowledge that dismisses ignorance, insufficient knowledge, deviation, distorted and inaccurate knowledge. A deep faith that negates any doubt in the mind or the heart. A sincerity that negates any state of apostasy or disbelief. A complete truthfulness that negates any form of lying. A complete, true, deep and meaningful love that negates any hate, dislike or other emotion. A complete following and obedience that entails leaving, banning, rejecting and denying any other authority that may issue a command to do things that disagree with the commands of Allah, the Almighty. An acceptance that negates any questioning or argumentive discussions. A full denial for any and all things, items, deities, persons, objects, creatures or other being which are worshipped other than Allah, the Almighty.

The preceding items are stated all in the following poem:

(One must have) Knowledge, Conviction, Sincerity, Truthfulness, Love, Submission, Full Acceptance and Complete Denial and Rejection of all other deities that may preoccupy man's mind of Allah, the Almighty.

Lesson Three:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the pillars of faith which are listed as follows:

Belief in Allah, the Almighty, His Angels, Scriptures (Divine Books of Revelation), Messengers/Prophets, Final Day of Resurrection and the Fate, whether it be good or bad, it is all from Allah, the Almighty.

Lesson Four:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) monotheism with all its three parts: Monotheism of Lordship, Monotheism of the Unity of God and Monotheism of the Names and Attributes of Allah, the Almighty.

Similarly, one also must do the same with polytheism with all its parts, namely the major, the minor and the subtle or hidden type.

Major polytheism causes the demolition and destruction of all good deeds which man does throughout one's life on the face of Earth. It also ensures one a permanent abode in the Hell Fire as Allah, the Almighty stated in the Glorious Quran: **"...If they were to join other gods with Him (Allah), all that they did would be vain for them." 6:88**

Also, it is based on the verse stated in the Glorious Quran: **"It is not for such as join gods with Allah, to visit or maintain the Mosque of Allah while they witness against their own souls to infidelity. The works of such bear no fruit: in Fire shall they dwell." 9:17**

If such a person dies in such a state of disbelief and infidelity, he shall get no forgiveness from Allah, the Almighty. Moreover, such a person will be fully denied the entry to Jannah (paradise) as Allah, the Almighty stated in the Glorious Quran: **"Allah forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgiveth anything else, to whom He pleaseth..." 4:48**

It is also based on the verse of the Glorious Quran: **"...Whoever joins other gods with Allah will forbid him the Garden, and the Fire will be his abode. There will for the wrongdoers be no one to help." 5:72**

Calling upon deceased and dead people for help, worshipping any form of idolatry and seeking help, assistance and aid from them, vowing to

slaughter animals or to do anything else for them, or for their sake or any similar act are also considered various types of polytheism.

As for the subtle, or hidden type of polytheism, it is declared in the Glorious Quran, and in the authentic text of the Hadith (statement of Allah's Apostle, PBUH). However, this is not the same as the first type, the major polytheism. Dissimulation or dissemblance in some acts, taking an oath with other things than Allah, the Almighty, saying a statement such as: "Whatever Allah's willth, and whatever so and so wills..." and other similar acts to these are all categorized as a subtle or hidden acts of polytheism. This categorization is based on the Hadith reported by Imam Ahmad, Tabaranee and Baihaqee, who all reported soundly of Mahmood bin Labeed al-Ansaree, and Tabaranee also reported the same Hadith soundly of Rafi' bin Khodaij who reported of Allah's Apostle, PBUH who said: "He whosoever takes an oath with others than Allah will become a polytheist." This Hadith was also reported soundly by Imam Ahmad of Omar bin al-Khattab, RAA. The same was also soundly reported by both Abu Dawood and Tirmithee of Ibn Omar, RAA who reported Allah's Apostle, PBUH saying: "He whosoever takes an oath by other than Allah, the Almighty, will commit an act of disbelief or polytheism."

Allah's Apostle, PBUH also stated: "Do not say: "Whatever Allah willth, and whatever so and so wills...," but rather say: "Whatever Allah willth, then whatever so and so wills..." This Hadith is reported by Abu Dawood soundly from the Hadith of Hothaifah bin al-Yaman, RAA.

This type of polytheism, however does not constitute apostasy from Islam and does not entail a permanent abode in the Fire, but it does not fully agree with perfect faith and monotheism that man must acquire in his life as a believing Muslim.

As for the third type of polytheism, the subtle or hidden polytheism which is listed earlier, the following is also categorized as such based on the Hadith, statement of Allah's Apostle, PBUH: "Shall I inform you about what I fear more than the false Messiah?" They (the companions) said:

"Yes. Oh Prophet of Allah!" He, PBUH said: "The subtle, or hidden polytheism... a man will offer a very fine Salah when he notices that an other person is looking or watching him." This Hadith is reported by Imam Ahmad in his book entitled "al-Mosnad", reporting from Abu Sai'eed al-Khodree, RAA.

Polytheism, however can be simplified by categorizing it into two types only, the Major and the Minor. The subtle or hidden type of polytheism actually involves both these types blended or mixed together. Hypocrites, for instance, commit major polytheism as they hide and conceal their false, inept, incorrect and distorted beliefs. In the meanwhile, such group of people pretend that they are Muslims and practice Islam. They do so merely to protect themselves from punishment.

Lesson Five:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the pillars of Islam (that is defined as total submission to the Will of Allah, the Almighty), which are listed as follows:

To bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allah alone, and Mohammed, PBUH, is His slave servant, Messenger; Maintain Salah (prayer); Maintain the payment of Zakah (charity); Observe Fasting during the month of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Islamic calendar); and to Perform Hajj (pilgrimage) to Makkah for those who can physically and financially afford it.

Lesson Six:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) Islam (total submission and surrender to the Will of Allah, the Almighty); Intelligence; Recognition; Removing the state of major and minor impurities; Covering and Protecting (in chastity) the private parts; Set Times for Salah; Directing to Qiblah (direction of Salah); and, finally, the pure Intention for all various acts of worship.

Lesson Seven:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the pillars and Arkan (requirements of Salah), which are listed as follows:

Standing up while offering Salah if one is capable of doing so; Saying aloud the phrase "Allah-u-Akbar" to declare the entry of Salah; Reciting the Fatiha (opening chapter of the Glorious Quran) (in Arabic); Performing Ruku (bowing); Standing upright fully after performing Ruku; Performing Sujud (prostrating) on the seven known parts (the forehead along with the nose, the palms of both hands while stretched and directed to the Qiblah, both knees, the tips of toes of both feet); Getting up after Sujud; Sitting for a short while between the two Sujuds; Calming down and having full composure while performing all various acts of Salah; Following the correct sequence of all these acts and requirements of Salah; Offering the final sitting reciting "Tashahud" (the testimony of faith); Offering the greetings and supplications for the Prophet, PBUH and finally to say the statement "As-Salamu 'alaikum wa rahmatul-lah" towards both the right and left sides.

Lesson Eight:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the eight prerequisites (Wajibat) or essential acts of Salah, which are listed as follows:

All declarations of "Allah-u-Akbar", other than the one stated to declare the entry of the prayer; saying the phrase "Sami'a Allahu Liman Hamedah" (Allah heard him who praised Him) by both the Imam who is leading a prayer, and the Mamoom, those following the Imam; saying the statement "Rab-bana Walakal Hamd" (Oh Our Lord! To You all praise is due) by both the Imam and the Mamoom, as well as, the person offering prayer alone; saying the phrase "Subhana Rabbia al-'Atheem" during Ruku; saying "Subhana Rabbia al-'Ala" during Sujud; saying

"Rabbighfir lee" (Oh My Lord! Forgive me) between both prostrations; saying the declaration of faith testimony while sitting.

<u>Lesson Nine:</u>

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the "Tashahhud" (declaration of testimony of faith) form (while sitting after the end of the second Rakah of Salah):

"(All) greetings, prayers and all good things are due to Allah, the Almighty. Peace be unto you, Oh Prophet of Allah, the mercy and the blessings of Allah be unto us, and unto the righteous slave servants of Allah. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allah alone. And, I bear witness that Mohammed is the slave servant and messenger of Allah. Oh Allah! Shower blessings upon Mohammed and upon the family of Mohammed as You showered blessings upon Abraham and the family of Abraham. And grant favors to Mohammed and to the family of Mohammed as You granted favors to Abraham and to the family of Abraham in this world. You are the Praiseworthy and Glorious."

In the final Tashahud, one must seek refuge with Allah, the Almighty, from the torture of the Hell Fire, the torture of the grave, the afflictions and temptations of life and death and the temptations of the false Messiah. Then, one may select and choose any other supplications prefered, with particular emphasis on those that have been soundly reported of Allah's Apostle, PBUH such as:

"Oh Allah! Help me to remember You, thank You and worship You in the best and most favorable fashion."

"Oh Allah! I have extremely wronged my soul. Oh Allah! There is no one else to pardon sins and forgive them save You. Oh Allah! Grant me a Pardon from Your own. Oh Allah! Shower me with Your Mercy, as You are the Beneficent, Most Merciful."

Lesson Ten:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the Sunan (voluntary actions performed by the Prophet, PBUH). The followings are few of these voluntary acts:

1. The opening of the prayer supplications.
2. Placing the right hand over the left hand, and placing both upon the chest while standing up in prayer.
3. Raising both hands, while fingers are tightly close to each other, to the level of both shoulders, or to the levels of the ears when offering the entry of prayer Takbeer, when going down for bowing, when raising the head to the standing position again before going down for prostration, and upon getting up from the first sitting after offering two Rakahs.
4. Offering more than one Tasbeeh in both bowing and prostration positions.
5. Offering more than one "Istighfar" seeking pardon and forgiveness, while sitting between the two prostrations.
6. Raise the level of the head with the back in Ruku.
7. While in prostration, placing both arms away from the side of the body and stretching the body away from the thighs.
8. Lifting both forearms off the ground while in Sujud.
9. Sitting on the left foot, while keeping the right foot in the upright position, toes bent in the direction of the Qiblah, during the first sitting for Tashahud, and during the two sittings between prostrations.
10. Sitting on the buttocks while keeping the right foot in the upright position with toes pointing in the direction of Qiblah during the final Tashahud position.
11. Offering the supplication of seeking mercy and blessings unto Mohammed, PBUH and his family, and Abraham and his family, during the final sitting for Tashahud.
12. Offering supplications while sitting for the final Tashahud.
13. Reciting aloud during Fajr prayer, the first two Rakahs of Maghrib prayer, and the first two Rakahs of Isha prayer.

14. Reciting quietly (in a soft voice) during Thohr, Asr, the last (3rd) Rakah of Maghrib, and the last two Rakahs of Isha prayers.
15. Reciting other verses of the Glorious Quran in addition to the Fatiha during all other Sunnah prayers.

Lesson Eleven:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the matters that nullify the Salah are listed below:

1. Talking (in other worldly affairs, other than the prayer itself) purposely (after entering, or joining a prayer). If a person does so unknowing, or forgets that it is unlawful, the prayer will not be rendered null and void.
2. Laughing out loud or giggling while in prayer.
3. Eating anything while in prayer.
4. Drinking anything while in prayer.
5. Uncovering the parts of the body that must be properly covered for both male and female (while in prayer).
6. Intentionally deviating significantly from the direction of Qiblah.
7. Excessive unnecessary movements while in prayer.
8. Breaking of Wudu for any reason.

Lesson Twelve:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the prerequisites of Wudu (ablution) which are stated as follows:

The state of Islam; sensibility (as oppose to the state of insane); recognition (as opposed to the state of complete unawareness); the proper intention to perform Wudu; the continuation of intention to perform Wudu until one completes what intended to do; the complete ceasing of what requires Wudu; proper cleanliness of all impurities after answering the call of nature, bleeding or any other similar items; the purity of the water which is used for performing Wudu; removing whatever prevents water

from the actual touching of the washed organ; and the entry of the due time of Salah for those who are suffering a continuous reason to perform Wudu (continuous bleeding, continuous leakage of urine, and the like).

Lesson Thirteen:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the obligatory matters of Wudu, as listed below:

Washing the face, and a part of that is rinsing the mouth and inhaling water through the nose; washing both hands to the elbows; wiping over the entire head including the ears; washing the feet and the heels (including the ankle bone of the foot); the proper sequence; and, doing all of these acts in one session.

Lesson Fourteen:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the six matters that nullify the Wudu which are listed below:

Answering the call of nature (urine or feces); ejaculation of semen; loosing awareness due to any reason such as sleeping, indexation or any similar cause; touching the private parts directly without the presence of a barrier; eating camel meat; and, apostasy from Islam, may Allah, the Almighty protect us all from such doing.

Important Note:
Washing a deceased person will not nullify the Wudu as it is authentically reported by the majority of scholars. There is no substantiated evidence to claiming otherwise. However, if the hand of the washing person touched the private parts of the deceased without a barrier, then such a washing person is required to perform his Wudu again. It should also be pointed out here that the washing person must not touch the private parts of a deceased in the first place unless he is using a rag, a sponge, a wash cloth or any similar item.

Similarly, touching one's wife, with or without a passion desire, absolutely will not render the ablution null, unless there is leakage of fluid from the private parts. This is based on the most authentic statements of the scholars who based their opinion on the fact that Allah's Apostle, PBUH kissed one of his wives and did not perform Wudu after that.

As for the statement of the Glorious Quran in both Nisa 4:43, and Maida 5:6: **"...or you have been in contact with women..."** it is meant here, Allah Knowth best, the actual intercourse, as Ibn 'Abbas, RAA and others explained.

Lesson Fifteen:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the acceptable, condoned and encouraged characteristics for every Muslim individual, such as:

Telling the truth; being trustworthy; being chaste; being bashful and modest; being brave; generous; loyal; decent; shunning away from all unlawful matters; being a good neighbor; assisting those in real need and bind in accordance to one's ability; and, other items that are indicated or encouraged in the Glorious Quran and the Sunnah practices of Allah's Apostle, PBUH.

Lesson Sixteen:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the acceptable, condoned and encouraged Islamic morals and attitudes, such as:

Offering the Islamic greetings; having a pleasant face and personality; using the right hand for eating or drinking; following correct manners and ethics for entering the mosque and the house, and upon leaving them; following the right practices for travelling; following the right practices with parents, relatives, neighbors, elders and youngers; offering congratulations upon a birth of a child; offering condolences upon a death

of a family member of any related, associate, friend, neighbor or acquaintance; and, other Islamic attitudes, morals and behaviors.

Lesson Seventeen:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the proper warning from all types of association with Allah, the Almighty and against practicing any act of disobedience to Allah, the Almighty, Allah's Apostle, PBUH and the rules and regulations of Islam, Islamic morals, attitudes, ethics, principles and the like. Some of these items are listed as follows:

The seven major destructive sins are namely: Associating anything in the worship of Allah, the Almighty; practicing, condoning, encouraging, promoting, paying for, getting paid for any illegal practices of black, white or other magic; killing anyone that is not entitled to kill except for a reason; using, wasting, spending or eating the funds of an orphan under one's custody; accepting usury in any form, giving or taking; fleeing the site of a fair Islamic fight or battle with the enemies of Islam and accusing innocent, chaste, honest and believing women with any act of adultery or inchastity.

Similarly, being disrespectful to parents and disobedient to them; disconnecting or boycotting all relations with relatives for no sound and valid Islamic reason; offering false testimony for any reason; hurting and bothering neighbors; doing injustice to anyone whether it is in bloodshed, funds, or private affairs from which Islam protects individuals; or doing anything else that is forbidden by Allah, the Almighty and Allah's Apostle, PBUH.

Lesson Eighteen:

(Learn, study, examine, apply, teach, promote and call for) the proper method of preparing a deceased for burial as follows:

1. Upon certainty of death, close the eyes and tighten the jaws.

2. Cover the private parts of the deceased upon washing. While raising the deceased a little, squeeze the abdomen lightly and gently, then cleaned properly using a wash cloth or any other item to clean both private parts, the front and the back. Then, the washing person must perform Wudu to the deceased, as if one where doing it himself. Then, the face, head and beard (for man) must be washed properly with water mixed with Sidr (lotus tree perfumed leaves) or any similar items. Then, wash the right side of the deceased, and follow then by washing the left side. Repeat the washing three separate times. The washing person must again pass the hand gently on the abdomen of the deceased squeezing to see if there is anything left in the intestines. The anus should be checked and properly wiped and cleaned, then sealed with a piece of cotton, gauze or any similar items. If such an item did not properly seal, then one may use pure clay soil, any other medical adhesive to seal the anus properly.

   After that, the washing person must repeat the Wudu. If the deceased was not properly cleaned, the washing may be repeated up to five to seven times. The deceased then is dried with a towel. Perfume may be used under the armpits, on the joints and all the organs that one uses for prostration. There is no harm in putting perfume all over the deceased body. The shrouds may be smoked with incense. The moustache and finger nails may be trimmed if long and need to be clipped. Hair of the deceased must NOT be combed. As for the deceased woman's hair, it should be braided into three braids and left behind the head.

3. Wrapping the deceased with a shroud. It is best for male deceased to be wrapped three white shrouds. No shirt (pants, underwear) or head cover is permitted. The deceased must be rolled into these shrouds. However, it is permitted in certain situations to wrap the deceased with a long shirt and a longi. As for a female, she must be wrapped in five shrouds.

As for a male deceased baby, he must wrapped using one up to three shrouds. The female deceased baby may be wrapped with a long shirt and two shrouds.

4. The most preferred person to wash a deceased is the person named to do so as stated in the deceased will. Next in line is the father, the grandfather, then the closest relatives from the father's side.

   As for the female deceased, it is also first entitled to wash her is the woman stated in the deceased's will. Next in line is the mother, the grandmother, then the closest women relatives.

   Husband and wife are permitted to wash the other if one dies before the other. This is based on the fact that Abu Bakr al-Siddeeq, RAA washed his deceased wife upon her death. Similarly, Ali, RAA did the same to his wife, Fatimah, RAA upon her death.

5. The description of the funeral prayer (Salat-ul-Janazah): The Imam says four times "Allah-u-Akbar". He recites Fatiha after the first Takbeer, and there is no harm to recite extra verses or a short Sura with Fatiha as reported in the authentic Hadith by Ibn 'Abbas, RAA. Then, after the second Takbeer, offer Tashahud, as in the regular Salah (prayer). Then, after the third Takbeer one says the following supplication: "Oh Allah! Forgive our living and our deceased, our present people and those who are absent, our young and old, our male and female. Oh Allah! He whosoever dies amongst us, Muslims, let him/her die in the state of faith. Oh Allah! He whosoever continues to live amongst us enable him/her to hold tight onto Islam. Oh Allah! Forgive our deceased, pardon him, be generous to him, ease his path, wash him with water, snow and hail, purify him/her from sins as a white garment is purified from dirt. Oh Allah! Substitute him/her with a better dwelling than his own home, and a better family than his own. Oh Allah! Let him/her enter paradise, Your Garden. Protect him/her from the torture of the grave, the torture of the Hell Fire. Oh Allah! Extend his/her grave (so long as he/she can see), and

enlighten it for him. Oh Allah! Do not deprive us the reward given to him. Do not misguide us after his death." Finally, he offers the fourth Takbeer and Salam to the right side only, (which is sufficient).

It is encouraged to raise the hands (to the shoulders or to the ear lobes) with every Takbeer. Also, one must make modifications for the pronouns if the deceased is a female, dual, group or otherwise.

In case the deceased was a child, then it is recommended to add the following statement to the supplications: "Oh Allah! Make that child a treasure and intercessor to his parents, and make their scale heavier due to him, increase their reward, cause him to be with the righteous slave servants of Yours and under the sponsorship of Abraham, and protect him from the torture of the Hell Fire."

It is the Sunnah practice of Allah's Apostle, PBUH to stand by the head of the deceased male, and the middle of the body of the female. If a group of deceased were presented together for funeral prayer, the males must be placed in front of the Imam while the females facing the direction of Qiblah. Moreover, if there were deceased children, they should be placed before the females.

All followers must pray behind the Imam in the funeral prayer. If a single person cannot find a place behind the Imam, then he may stand next to the Imam, on the right side.

All praise is due to Allah, the Almighty. May the peace and the blessings of Allah be unto Prophet Mohammed, PBUH, his family and his rightly guided companions.